

Office of Congressman Charles W. Dent
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Congressman Dent votes to prevent lawsuit abuse

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Oct. 27) — U.S. Rep. Charlie Dent (PA-15) reiterated his support for litigation reform by voting for H.R. 420, the Lawsuit Abuse Reduction Act of 2005, which passed the House on Thursday by a vote of 228-184.

“This legislation will help curb abusive and frivolous lawsuits that tie up our courts and damage our economy,” Congressman Dent said. “Across the country, there is a culture of litigation that often causes employers and entrepreneurs to spend money on lawyers instead of investing in and growing their businesses and creating jobs.”

The Lawsuit Abuse Reduction Act of 2005 provides for appropriate sanctions against frivolous lawsuits. Specifically, the bill:

- Restores mandatory sanctions on attorneys, law firms, or parties who file frivolous lawsuits;
- Abolishes the “free pass” provision that allows parties and their attorneys to avoid sanctions by withdrawing a suit within 21 days after a motion for sanctions has been filed;
- Permits monetary sanctions, including reimbursement of reasonable attorney’s fees and litigation costs in connection with frivolous lawsuits;
- Extends Rule 11’s provisions preventing frivolous lawsuits to apply to state cases in which a state judge finds the case substantially affects interstate commerce by threatening jobs and economic losses to other states;

- Provides a national solution to prevent forum shopping by requiring personal injury cases only be brought only where the plaintiff resides, where the plaintiff was allegedly injured, where the circumstances of the injury occurred, or where the defendant's principal place of business is located.

“These changes are fair and won't harm Americans' right to their day in court with legitimate cases.” Congressman Dent said. “When I came to Congress I promised to reform the tort system, and I'm proud to vote today for this bill.”

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